

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
RICK BOUCHER, VIRGINIA
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY
BART GORDON, TENNESSEE
BOBBY L. RUSH, ILLINOIS
ANNA G. ESHOO, CALIFORNIA
BART STUPAK, MICHIGAN
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK
ALBERT R. WYNN, MARYLAND
GENE GREEN, TEXAS
DIANA DEGETTE, COLORADO
VICE CHAIRMAN
LOIS CAPPS, CALIFORNIA
MIKE DOYLE, PENNSYLVANIA
JANE HARMAN, CALIFORNIA
TOM ALLEN, MAINE
JAN SCHAKOWSKY, ILLINOIS
HILDA L. SOLIS, CALIFORNIA
CHARLES A. GONZALEZ, TEXAS
JAY INSLEE, WASHINGTON
TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN
MIKE ROSS, ARKANSAS
DARLENE HOOLEY, OREGON
ANTHONY D. WEINER, NEW YORK
JIM MATHESON, UTAH
G.K. BUTTERFIELD, NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLIE MELANCON, LOUISIANA
JOHN BARROW, GEORGIA
BARON P. HILL, INDIANA

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

JOHN D. DINGELL, MICHIGAN
CHAIRMAN

JOE BARTON, TEXAS
RANKING MEMBER
RALPH M. HALL, TEXAS
J. DENNIS HASTERT, ILLINOIS
FRED UPTON, MICHIGAN
CLIFF STEARNS, FLORIDA
NATHAN DEAL, GEORGIA
ED WHITFIELD, KENTUCKY
BARBARA CUBIN, WYOMING
JOHN SHIMKUS, ILLINOIS
HEATHER WILSON, NEW MEXICO
JOHN B. SHADEGG, ARIZONA
CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING, MISSISSIPPI
VITO FOSSELLA, NEW YORK
STEVE BUYER, INDIANA
GEORGE RADANOVICH, CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH R. PITTS, PENNSYLVANIA
MARY BONO, CALIFORNIA
GREG WALDEN, OREGON
LEE TERRY, NEBRASKA
MIKE FERGUSON, NEW JERSEY
MIKE ROGERS, MICHIGAN
SUE MYRICK, NORTH CAROLINA
JOHN SULLIVAN, OKLAHOMA
TIM MURPHY, PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL C. BURGESS, TEXAS
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE

September 18, 2007

DENNIS B. FITZGIBBONS, CHIEF OF STAFF
GREGG A. ROTHSCHILD, CHIEF COUNSEL

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500-0003

Dear Mr. President,

Like you, we are strong supporters of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and we support the goal of reauthorizing this important program. We cannot, however, support the policies that underlie H.R. 3162, the Democratic majority's "CHAMP Act," and we applaud your decision to veto this deeply flawed legislation if it is presented to you in its current form.

We believe health care coverage for our children deserves more legislative consideration and review than it has been given by the Democratic Leadership of the House. As you may know, the 460-plus pages of the CHAMP Act were hidden from Republican members of Congress and the American people until nearly midnight of the day it was scheduled for legislative action in the Energy and Commerce Committee. Unfortunately, there was neither a legislative hearing on the bill, nor enough time given to Members in order for them to fully consider the impact of this complex proposal. Under the guise of a reauthorization of the popular SCHIP program, the CHAMP Act represents a massive expansion of government-run health care. Clearly, it is the intention of the Democratic Leadership to not only reauthorize the current SCHIP program, which provides health insurance coverage to low-income, uninsured children, but to also fundamentally alter and expand the program to include middle-class and wealthy families and adults, many of whom already have private health insurance. Children's health coverage provided by the taxpayers should be for poor children, not adults with \$100,000 incomes. By replacing private health insurance coverage with government health care, the Democratic majority is attempting to shift more costs onto the already overburdened American taxpayers. Working Americans rejected this idea when the Clinton Administration proposed it.

SCHIP was created in 1997 with the strong support of Republican members of Congress. During its first 10 years, the Federal government spent just more than \$40 billion and currently provides health coverage for over 6.7 million children. Under the Democratic Leadership's CHAMP Act, the bipartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that SCHIP spending will grow to \$178.7 billion during the next ten years. In exchange for this astonishing increase in reliance on the taxpayers, the CBO estimates that only 600,000 additional children who are currently eligible would be covered by SCHIP in 2012. The people who work and pay their taxes are counting on us not to let SCHIP become Sen. Hillary Clinton's dream come true.

The reason the Democrats' bill costs so much is simple. The primary goal of the CHAMP Act is to force millions more Americans into inefficient, government-run bureaucracies. The CHAMP Act will sign up adults making well over \$100,000 for what is supposed to be an effort to help needy children. In fact, the legislation contains nothing to ban people of any income level from taxpayer-funded SCHIP coverage. Moreover, they don't even have to be citizens. This legislation overturns current law mandating that States verify the citizenship and identity of applicants and spends billions of dollars to provide financial incentives to States that do enroll non-U.S. citizens into their taxpayer-funded public-assistance programs.

We are also troubled that this legislation pays for the massive expansion in government-run health care by taking funds away from millions of senior citizens on Medicare. The bill cuts over \$157 billion out of the Medicare Advantage program. This is money that is used to lower the cost of premiums, eliminate co-payments, provide enhanced benefits such as vision and dental benefits, and provide access to affordable prescription drugs. As a result, an estimated 3 million beneficiaries will lose their Medicare Advantage coverage.

Other vulnerable populations are also targeted for severe cuts to pay for this legislation. Over \$27 billion is cut out of commonly used services, including cuts to home oxygen, imaging services, the end stage renal disease program, home health services, and power wheelchairs. When all is said and done, the Democrats seek to cut over \$17 billion out of payments to hospitals, nursing homes, and rehab facilities.

In short, Mr. President, H.R.3162 is a vehicle to do what the Clinton administration failed to do — force Americans into a Washington-controlled, bureaucrat-run health care program. Should the CHAMP Act become law, more individuals would lose access to private health insurance, forcing them into government-run insurance. The Democrats are attempting to draw our constituents out of private coverage and into a government bureaucracy. This would have disastrous effects on the health care delivery system in this country.

Mr. President, we support reauthorization of the SCHIP program and believe it is possible to reach a bipartisan agreement to strengthen this program whose purpose is to provide health care coverage to low income children. To accomplish that, we strongly support your decision to veto the legislation passed by the House and look forward to working with you to responsibly reauthorize this worthy program.

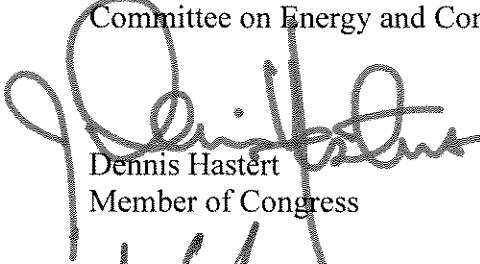
Respectfully,



Joe Barton
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Nathan Deal
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health



Dennis Hastert
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



John Shimkus
Member of Congress



Mike Rogers, MI
Member of Congress



John Shadegg
Member of Congress



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Barbara Cubin
Member of Congress



Joseph Pitts
Member of Congress



Steve Buyer
Member of Congress



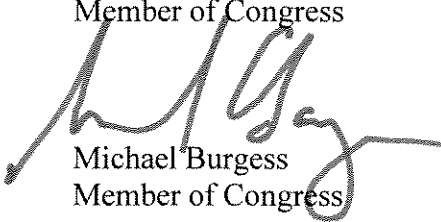
Lee Terry
Member of Congress



Ed Whitfield
Member of Congress



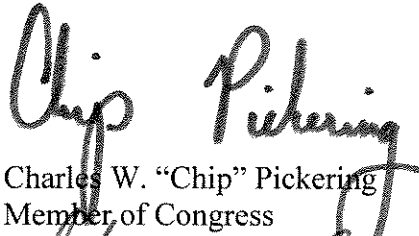
John Sullivan
Member of Congress

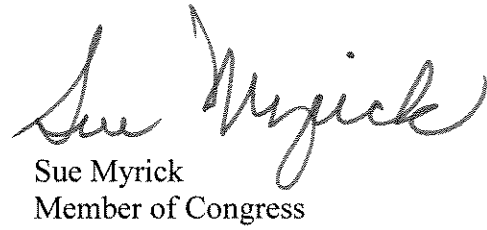


Michael Burgess
Member of Congress

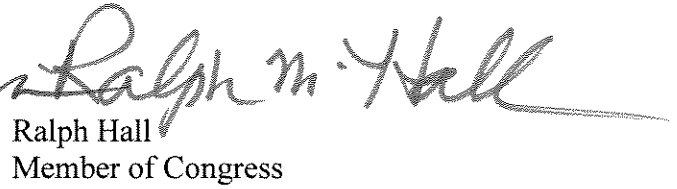


Cliff Stearns
Member of Congress


Charles W. "Chip" Pickering
Member of Congress


Sue Myrick
Member of Congress


Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress


Ralph Hall
Member of Congress